

Sometimes I think the greatest moments of my life now are when I am able to represent you when I go overseas, because when I get in Air Force One and go to another country as a force for peace in Northern Ireland, when all those people—you saw it on the television—were in the streets screaming, they weren't screaming for Bill Clinton. They weren't even screaming for the President of the United States. They were cheering the United States. They were cheering America and everything we stand for.

And when I go other places and I talk to foreign leaders, they sometimes say to me, "I read all these surveys in America about how pessimistic people are, about how they don't have faith in their institutions," he said. And foreign leaders all over the world, they say, "How could this be? Your country has a lower unemployment rate than other countries, your country has created—" all the jobs that have been created in the seven biggest economies in the world, net, in the last 7 years is the number that have been created here. The rest—some created a few, some lost a few, they're net out zero. We have all the jobs, net. Our deficit today is a smaller percentage of our income than any of our major competitors.

Our country is admired and trusted. Just a few years ago we thought we might go to war with Russia. When this issue in Bosnia came up, I met with the President of Russia, and he said—the President of Russia said—he looked at me and he said, "Bill, I will send as many Russian soldiers as you want to serve under whatever American general you name." That is a great gift. That is a gift.

And so I leave you with this challenge. You live in a great country. Sure, we've got some

problems. We're human beings. Yes, we make some mistakes. We're human beings. We are not a superhuman race of people. But there is no country on Earth where so many diverse people get together and work together so well, no country on Earth with more resources to deal with the challenges it faces. And we cannot afford to be cynical or skeptical or pessimistic about our future.

I am moved by you being here more than any words I can say, just because you're here and you're enthusiastic and you're full of energy. And what I want you to do is to leave this place tonight, and when you wake up tomorrow and the next day and the next day and the next day, you tell your fellow Americans, "You don't have a right to be cynical, you don't have a right to be pessimistic. This is the greatest country in human history, and we're going to make it greater."

Thank you, and God bless you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:38 p.m. in the Back Gymnasium at Salem High School. In his remarks, he referred to Larry Belair, Salem town moderator; Joe Keefe, Mike Garofalo, and Cheryl Breton, Democratic Party chairs of New Hampshire, Rockingham County, and Salem, respectively; Henry LaBranche, superintendent, Salem School District; Patrick Cobin, principal, Salem High School; Aaron and Louise Feuerstein of Malden Mills Industries, Inc., who continued to pay employees after their Methuen, MA, textile factory burned in December 1995; and President Boris Yeltsin of Russia. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

The President's Radio Address *February 3, 1996*

Good morning. I would like to talk to you this morning about how we can meet one of the challenges I outlined in my State of the Union Address: providing greater economic security to Americans who work hard, and especially how we can ensure that those Americans have access to health care, because millions and

millions of working Americans and their families don't have access to health care.

There can be no doubt that we do live in an age of great possibility, a time of exploding technology and information, a time that will enable more Americans than ever before to fulfill their dreams. But this new economy, with so

much opportunity, also has very stiff challenges, as most Americans know. Our news is not all good. While this new economy has produced a record number of new businesses in each of the last 3 years and nearly 8 million new jobs, too many of our fellow citizens are still working harder and harder just to keep up. They are rightly concerned about the security of their families. They are worried about job security. They are worried about never seeming to get a raise. They are worried about access to education, the security of their pensions, and access to health care.

Our challenge is to make sure that all Americans can be winners in this time of change. How are we going to do it? First, we have to keep our economy growing. That's one reason we should balance the budget: It will keep interest rates coming down, bringing in more investments, generating more jobs. After many weeks of negotiations, the Republicans and I already have agreed on more than enough cuts that are common to each of our plans to balance the budget in 7 years and still provide a modest middle class tax cut; to maintain our obligations to parents and children and to the future through the Medicare and Medicaid programs and through our investments in education; and to protect the environment.

I urge the Republicans in Congress to keep working with me so that we can actually pass a balanced budget. We have the savings in common, we can do it, and we owe it to the American people to do it.

Second, we have to work together to create more new high-wage jobs in the new industries of the future. That's why I was very pleased that just this week Congress passed landmark telecommunications legislation, legislation we have been working on for more than 3 years. It will create a lot of high-wage jobs. It will give consumers more choices in communications and in entertainment. It will help to unlock the power of the digital revolution. This legislation was passed the way we should deal with all our challenges, with Members of both parties working together and working together until they got it right.

The third thing we should do is raise the minimum wage. Millions of people are raising children on the minimum wage. But if we don't raise it within a year it will be at a 40-year low in its purchasing power. We can't build a

new economy with that kind of income to raise children on.

And fourth, we must make sure that every working American has the personal economic security to make the most of his or her own life and to support a family. That means lifetime access to education and training. It means portable, secure pensions. And above all, for people with families especially, it means access to health care.

Our Nation is the only leading economy in the world where insurance companies are allowed to deny you coverage or raise your rates just because you're sick. If you have a pre-existing condition like diabetes, high blood pressure, or heart disease, an insurance company can simply turn you down. If you are healthy but your child has asthma, your child can be denied coverage. And in some cases, if you're pregnant and you move to a new job, that can be enough to turn you away.

Many millions more people simply lose their health coverage as they move from one job to another. Believe it or not, between 1991 and 1993 some 64 million people went without health insurance for some period of time. For working families that's like walking on a tight-rope without a net below.

We shouldn't put obstacles in the way of people who want to move to better jobs. We certainly shouldn't put additional burdens on people who lose their jobs that they want to keep. At the very least, our first step should be to make sure that working people who have health insurance can take it with them from job to job.

The State of New Hampshire, where I am today, is one of 42 States to take some action to try and solve this problem. But only if we take national action will we truly be able to give working people access to health care. There is bipartisan legislation that would protect these working families, sponsored by Senator Nancy Kassebaum, a Republican from Kansas, and Senator Edward Kennedy, a Democrat from Massachusetts. The bill would require insurers to cover men and women who have lost insurance because they change or lose their jobs. It would limit the ability of insurance companies to exclude you from coverage if you have a pre-existing condition. And it would help small businesses and individuals pool their resources to buy insurance at cheaper rates. It could help as many as 25 million Americans each year to

have or to keep their health insurance. It's good common sense, and it's the right thing to do.

The Kassebaum-Kennedy bill has 43 cosponsors from both parties in the Senate. It passed through its committee unanimously. It has the support of the National Association of Manufacturers, the chamber of commerce, and the national small business union. It is supported by doctors as well as consumer groups. It should pass easily.

When I challenged Congress to pass this bipartisan health care reform in my State of the Union Address, nearly every Member of Congress jumped to their feet and applauded, but now the bill is stalled. It turns out that some Senators have quietly been working to keep this bill from coming up to a vote even though it passed out of the committee unanimously. Why are they doing it? Because that's what the insurance industry wants them to do. And the insurance industry is lobbying hard against the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill.

This health reform, however, is sensible. It's straightforward. It's fair. It is genuinely bipartisan. It will help to give peace of mind to literally millions of American families. I call on every Member of Congress who stood up for

this bill when the cameras were on to stand up for it now, to pass the Kassebaum-Kennedy health reform bill and to pass it without delay.

If we believe that hard-working people deserve a chance to better their lives without sacrificing their health insurance, then we must pass this bill now. If we believe it's wrong to deny health coverage to a person just because he or she is sick, then we must pass this bill now. If we believe a sick child should not be denied health care while her healthy brothers and sisters are still covered, we must pass this bill now. This bill is an example of what we can do when we put aside partisanship and work together for the common good. Millions of lives will be changed for the better when it becomes law. We shouldn't let any special interest get in the way now. Let's work together and pass the Kassebaum-Kennedy bill, and let's do it now.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:45 p.m. on February 2 at the Sanders Lockheed plant in Nashua, NH, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 3.

Remarks to the Community in Manchester, New Hampshire

February 3, 1996

Thank you very much. Hello. Thank you very much, Sergeant Robidas, for your introduction and for your fine work. Thank you, Nancy Tessier, for your work at the Beech Street School and for your support of community policing. Chief Favreau; to the Concord police chief, Dave Walchak, who is a great honor for New Hampshire, he's the president of the International Association of Police Chiefs, and we're glad to have you here.

I want to thank the others who have been with me today: your United States Attorney, Paul Gagnon; your U.S. Marshal, Ray Gagnon; the Hillsborough County attorney, Peter McDonough. And I thank Father Adrian Longchamps, who met with me today. I want to thank the police officers in particular who visited with me just a moment ago at the community station, Tyrone Guyse and Nick Willard.

And I want to say to Mr. Byron, the police officer who is standing here to my right—right before I came up here he said, "Mr. President, this is the best job I ever had. I love doing this work."

I want to thank two others who are in our group today: Pauline Coat, the executive director of the Manchester Neighborhood Services, and in some ways the linchpin of this whole experiment, Alice Septin, who is the head of the Take Back Our Neighborhood Corporation. Let's give her a big hand. *[Applause]* Thank you, Alice.

I thank all the community police officers who are here, all those who participated in Operation Street Sweeper. I thank the D.A.R.E. students and the people in the D.A.R.E. program who are here. Let's give them a big hand. *[Applause]* And I thank the AmeriCorps members who are